

Florin Japanese-American Citizens League
Oral History Project

Oral History Interview

with

WOODROW TOSHIRO ISHIKAWA

March 30, 1993
Sacramento, California

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JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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PREFACE

In the summer of 1987, a small group of people from the Florin JACL met at Mary and Al Tsukamoto's home to plan a new project for the organization. Because of the unique history of Florin, we felt that there were special stories that needed to be preserved. The town of Florin, California was once a thriving farming community with a large Japanese American population. The World War II internment of persons of Japanese ancestry living on the west coast, devastated the town and it never recovered. Today there is no town of Florin; it has been merged into the larger county of Sacramento. Many Japanese Americans who reside throughout the United States, however, have their origins from Florin, or have relatives and friends who once had ties to this community. The town may no longer exist, but the spirit of the community continues to survive in people's hearts and memories.

Several hours have been devoted to interviewing former Florin residents. The focus of the interviews was on the forced internment and life in the relocation camps, but our questions touched on other issues. We asked about their immigration to the United States from Japan, pre-war experiences, resettlement after the war and personal philosophies. We also wanted to record the stories of the people left behind. They were friends and neighbors who watched in anguish as the trains transported the community away.

We have conducted these interviews with feelings of urgency. If we are to come away with lessons from this historic tragedy, we must listen to and become acquainted with the people who were there. Many of these historians are in their 70's, 80's and 90's. We are grateful that they were willing to share their experiences and to answer our questions with openness and thoughtfulness.

We owe special thanks to James F. Carlson, former Assistant Dean of American River College and to Jackie Reinier, former Director of the Oral History Program at California State University in Sacramento. Without their enthusiasm, encouragement and expertise, we never could have produced this collection of oral histories. We also wish to acknowledge the project members, volunteers, the Florin JACL which contributed financial support, Sumitomo Bank for their corporate donation, and the Taisho Young Mens Association which contributed some of their assets as they dissolved their corporation on December 31, 1991.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERVIEW HISTORY	i
BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY	ii
[Tape 1, Side A].....	1
<p>History of mother and father--Arrival, education, and work in the United States--Establishment and purchase of land in Florin--Growing Tokay grapes--Return to Japan--Sisters in San Francisco and brother in Fresno-- School days--Sports in high school--Prejudice--Service in Army.</p>	
[Tape 1, Side B].....	25
<p>Experience with racial prejudice in South--Feelings of being uprooted--<u>Gaman</u> of <u>Isseis</u>--Marriage to Mary-- Round dancing--Working in a war plant--Son, a teacher in Elk Grove--Arthritis--Work at Mather and McClellan-- Retirement in 1979--Golfing--Son, grandson.</p>	
[Tape 2, Side A].....	46
<p>Grandson's attendance at Art School in Seattle-- Dancing for physical exercise--President of Florin JACL in 1951--JACL youth movement--Attorneys in family--Traveling--Passing of father and mother-- Heart attack in 1985--Swimming experience.</p>	
[Tape 2, Side B].....	64
<p>Trips to Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, Salt Lake City-- Noguchi's interviewing experiences for Florin JACL-- Mary and Al Tsukamoto's contributions to community-- Expression of thanks to interviewee.</p>	
APPENDIX	
<p>Copy of "Green Card" from Camp Names List</p>	

INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER

Kinya Noguchi was a Deputy Sheriff with the rank of Lieutenant before his retirement. He is a member of the VFW Nisei Post 8985. He graduated from Sacramento State University in Business Administration with graduate work in Public Administration.

Woodrow Toshiro Ishikawa agreed to be interviewed as part of the Florin JACL Oral History project in conjunction with the California State University, Sacramento Oral History Project. The interview occurred at Woodrow T. Ishikawa's home on March 30, 1993, located on 9010 Tokay Lane, Sacramento, California. The interview took place in the evening, and the entire interview was completed without any interruptions. There was laughter on many occasions, and both the interviewer and interviewee were at ease, and the tapes may have been inaudible.

After the papers were submitted, the interview was printed and returned to Woodrow Ishikawa for final editing and his approval. The entire package was returned to Project Director Marion Kanemoto with the entire interview papers with photos and necessary documents to complete the interview.

TRANSCRIBING AND EDITING

Heidi Sakazaki, Florin JACL member, retired from California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board as Staff Services Manager, transcribed the tapes. Woodrow Ishikawa and Kinya Noguchi edited the first draft.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Some pictures, on loan from the family album, were reproduced by Dan Inouye, Florin JACL member.

TAPES AND INTERVIEW RECORDS

Copies of the bound transcript and the tapes will be kept by the Florin Japanese American Citizens League and in the University Archives at the Library, California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, California 95819.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

At the beginning of the twentieth century Woodrow T. Ishikawa's father, Saijiro Ishikawa, emigrated to the United States from Toyama Ken, Japan. After arriving in San Francisco, he stayed in the Bay Area and attended Berkeley High School to learn English and learned to speak English quite well. Around 1905 he moved to Sacramento County and took up farming. Thereafter, Saijiro Ishikawa was able to purchase land at 9010 Tokay Lane. In 1908 he went back to Japan to marry Fusa Ishiguro.

During the subsequent years, Saijiro and Fusa Ishikawa raised Tokay grapes and did very well.

Woodrow Ishikawa, named after President Woodrow Wilson, youngest of five children, was born on November 3, 1917, on this very property we are conducting this interview. He attended a two-room grammar school right across from their property, Sutter Junior High, and graduated from Sacramento High School. His higher education was at Sacramento Junior College.

During this period the Ishikawas with their five children did not encounter any racial discrimination by the Caucasian neighbors. Woodrow did mention that from time to time, he heard the word, "Jap," but it wasn't directed toward him.

Woodrow (we call him "Woody") got along well with his fellow students, and he participated in sports. He excelled in baseball as catcher throughout his junior high school years.

The Ishikawa family was evacuated to Tule Lake Camp, and after segregation, transferred to Jerome, Arkansas. Woodrow left camp and moved to Cleveland, Ohio. In 1945 Woodrow was drafted into the army and sent to Camp Fannin in Tyler, Texas. He was not in the famed 442nd but his older brother, who is an attorney living in Fresno, did serve with the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Woodrow was assigned to an infantry company but never left stateside. He stated it was the worst army camp in the U. S., and the first to close after the war. It was there in Tyler, Texas that he saw racial prejudice. The "blacks" were treated very badly. In the

army camp the white soldiers didn't come out to say "Jap" outright, but you could feel it because they just ignored you.

Woodrow met his wife, Mary, in Jerome and their romance blossomed while they were both in Cleveland. After many dates they were married in 1950.

While in Cleveland he worked in a factory that made parts for B29 bombers. During that time, being the only Japanese at the factory, co-workers showed no discrimination.

After moving back to Sacramento, his father passed away in 1951. His mother passed away in 1975.

After their marriage they both worked in their grape vineyard, but after a short time Mary went to work at Mather Field in the accounting department.

In 1956 Woody gave up farming, and he too went to work for the government at McClellan Air Force Base as a computer technician. Woodrow was later promoted to supervisor of his unit.

In 1979 Woody retired from McClellan Field.

Woodrow and Mary have one son, born in 1951, who is presently a teacher at Joseph Kerr Junior High School in Elk Grove.

The Ishikawas have two grandchildren.

Woodrow talks very affectionately about his son, who earned his Eagle Scout badge at an early age of fifteen (15).

Woodrow Ishikawa found time to contribute to community organizations, boy scouts, and churches, in addition to his work as supervisor. He was a two-term president of the Florin JACL Chapter. He played a major role when the U. S. Government was awarding those Japanese who were evacuated during the war that lost property receive 10 cents on the dollar.

He is still actively involved and assisted the chapter in organizing the chapter members in Redress by preparing documents.

Currently, he is involved with the Day of Remembrance Program sponsored by the Florin JACL Chapter.

Woody, with a smile on his face, said he started to play an active role in the JACL movement in 1939.

Presently, he and Mary are enjoying their retirement with lots of golfing, ballroom dancing, travel, and, most of all, his family and grandchildren.

As we concluded the interview, he talked about being a senior citizen and what he has to do to keep the stiffness and pain away.

The few hours I spent with Woodrow Ishikawa were very rewarding for me. Woodrow Ishikawa is an outstanding individual with a very positive attitude, a lot of compassion for others, and love of life. I enjoyed sharing this time with him and hope we can spend more time together in the future.

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

NOGUCHI: [This is an interview with Woodrow Ishikawa] who lives on 9010 Tokay Lane, Sacramento, 95829. This interview is sponsored by the Oral History Program Center for California Studies, California State University, and the Sacramento Chapter, Japanese-American Citizens League Chapter, Florin. Today's date is March 30, 1993. It is now 1:20 p.m. I will start the oral interview by asking Woody by giving me his full name.

ISHIKAWA: Woodrow Ishikawa.

NOGUCHI: Can you give me your date of birth and where you were born?

ISHIKAWA: November 3, 1917, born here in Sacramento County.

NOGUCHI: Let's go back to your parents and if you can give me your father's and mother's full name.

ISHIKAWA: My father's name was Saijiro Ishikawa, born in Toyama Ken, Japan, on March 24, 1873, and my mother's name was Fusa Ishikawa. She was also born in Toyama Ken, Japan, on April 27, 1889.

NOGUCHI: OK. Your mother's maiden name was Ishiguro?

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: OK. Can you tell me about your parents as to when they arrived in the United States and how they got together? Did they ever talk about their time when they were young?

ISHIKAWA: Very little. I didn't know about it but my dad must have come here when he was approximately 18 - 19 years old. That makes it about around. . .

NOGUCHI: Gosh, that's been quite a while. It would be about--almost around 1900?

ISHIKAWA: Right. Well, before 1900.

NOGUCHI: Before 1900. Yeah, and did he come by himself first?

ISHIKAWA: With many other young immigrants.

NOGUCHI: Where did they arrive?

ISHIKAWA: They arrived in San Francisco.

NOGUCHI: Oh, in San Francisco.

ISHIKAWA: And he stayed in the Bay Area for quite a while.

NOGUCHI: OK.

ISHIKAWA: Also attending Berkeley High School there. He learned his English after he got over here, and my dad did speak pretty good English.

NOGUCHI: OK. Let me stop this and--the part about Woody's name was not clear on the tape so I will repeat it. His full name is Woodrow Toshio

Ishikawa and I will continue the interview from here in regards to Woody's father and mother and we'll talk about his parents anyway. As he has stated, his father came over first as a youth and attended Berkeley High School and speaks English quite well. Woody, can you tell me about the time what he did after he went to school there?

ISHIKAWA: As all immigrants I suppose he did housework and eventually came out to farm in Sacramento County and did this and that and finally he bought this property right here in the year 1905.

NOGUCHI: So he's talking about the home that we are now interviewing Woody which is on 9010 Tokay Lane.

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: Were there very many homes around here at the time your dad established himself here?

ISHIKAWA: I wouldn't know. I doubt it.

NOGUCHI: Did he ever talk about who was living here as far as Japanese community? Hakujins--Caucasians?

ISHIKAWA: As far as Nihonjins there were a few Nihonjins but. . .

NOGUCHI: Oh, they were here already?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. No, not. . .

NOGUCHI: Did they arrive about the same time?

- ISHIKAWA: Right.
- NOGUCHI: What kind of farming did he do on this property?
- ISHIKAWA: He farmed grapes.
- NOGUCHI: Grapes. Oh.
- ISHIKAWA: Tokay grapes.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, the famous Tokay grapes.
- ISHIKAWA: That's right, uh huh.
- NOGUCHI: Did he have any Hakujin friends here that . . .
- ISHIKAWA: Oh, yeah. Couple of neighbors here. They were very friendly, yeah.
- NOGUCHI: Did he recall or did he talk about any particular Hakujin family that was very close to the family?
- ISHIKAWA: He had a very good friend right here--neighbor over here and I know most of the Hakujin people around here were really friendly. We had no problems.
- NOGUCHI: Did they --were there a few Nihonjins next door too? Japanese families? Or were they mostly Caucasian friends in the neighborhood?
- ISHIKAWA: Afterwards?
- NOGUCHI: No, when your dad arrived.
- ISHIKAWA: Very few.
- NOGUCHI: Very few. So he was one of the earlier arrivals then in this area?

- ISHIKAWA: That's it. He was probably one of the first ones to own property.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, is that right? That's interesting. So he was very business man then-- well, decided that he was going to establish himself.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, a go-getter.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, uh huh. How did he get the money? Did he ever talk about getting the money to purchase the land?
- ISHIKAWA: I imagine land was pretty cheap. [LAUGHTER]
- NOGUCHI: You know, you had to work to earn that money to purchase the land and when you talk about 30 acres.
- ISHIKAWA: All that time he worked in the Bay Area. He was able to save money. After all, those old timers--they thought about the future much better than we did. [LAUGHTER]
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, I guess so. So, he bought this property first before he called your mom to. . .
- ISHIKAWA: That's right.
- NOGUCHI: . . . for marriage? How was the marriage arranged?
- ISHIKAWA: He purchased this property in 1905 and started farming it and then in 1908, I believe, he went to Japan.
- NOGUCHI: Oh. He went back to get your mom.
- ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: Was it in the same area in Toyama, Japan? Or was it made--
arrangements were already made by your grandparents or his parents?

ISHIKAWA: That I don't know.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

ISHIKAWA: But they didn't live too far apart.

NOGUCHI: Oh, they knew each other before he came to the United States?

ISHIKAWA: I doubt it.

NOGUCHI: Oh, is there quite an age difference then?

ISHIKAWA: There is--fifteen--about fifteen years.

NOGUCHI: Just like my mom and dad. So he went back and. . .

ISHIKAWA: Got married.

NOGUCHI: How long did he stay before they got married in Japan?

ISHIKAWA: That I wouldn't know.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he didn't talk about that, huh. Was there a romance involved or did
he. . .

ISHIKAWA: Japanese style.

NOGUCHI: Japanese style, OK. [LAUGHTER]

ISHIKAWA: He brought her over after he got married.

NOGUCHI: When they were in Japan, were there any of their relatives that wanted to
come over here too?

ISHIKAWA: I wouldn't know.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he didn't talk about that. So as far as you know, your dad was the only one from your Ishikawa family that came to the United States?

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: Just like my parents. So when he arrived into--when he brought your mother back they moved right to--I mean they came straight to this home here?

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: And what kind of a home--did he build a home or was the home already built?

ISHIKAWA: I believe they built their own home.

NOGUCHI: He built his home. He did it himself or did he have somebody. . .

ISHIKAWA: Neighbors helped him.

NOGUCHI: Oh, the neighbors helped him. That's great and how many years were they married before you came along?

ISHIKAWA: Let's see--well. . .

NOGUCHI: Are you the oldest?

ISHIKAWA: No, I'm the youngest.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you are the youngest! Oh, so how many brothers and sisters do you have then?

ISHIKAWA: I have a sister in San Francisco that was born in 1910.

NOGUCHI: In 1910, uh huh.

ISHIKAWA: Another sister in San Francisco born in 1913.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

ISHIKAWA: And I've got a brother in Fresno born 1915--and me.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you're the last one, OK.

ISHIKAWA: That's how I got my name, Woody. Woodrow Wilson was President.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see, uh huh. [LAUGHTER]

Your sisters are still alive in San Francisco?

ISHIKAWA: Yes, both of them are.

NOGUCHI: Both of them are alive.

ISHIKAWA: Youngest one is very sick.

NOGUCHI: Oh, very sick. Did they ever get married? Are both of them married?

ISHIKAWA: No. The oldest one has five children.

NOGUCHI: Oh, she has five.

ISHIKAWA: The second one never did get married--the one that's sick.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: My brother has two children.

NOGUCHI: Has two, uh huh. What part of Fresno is that? In the city or out in the outlying area?

ISHIKAWA: He lived in downtown.

NOGUCHI: Oh, downtown.

ISHIKAWA: He was in downtown. Now he's on the farm. When his wife's folks died they moved into the farm.

NOGUCHI: Oh, so what did he do downtown then?

ISHIKAWA: Oh, he's an attorney.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he's the attorney, oh. Then he moved into the country afterwards.

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's interesting. Then the family were all raised here then--all four of the children?

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: OK. Do you recall some of the things that happened when you were a youngster?

ISHIKAWA: Like what?

NOGUCHI: Well, how did you get along with your school classmates?

ISHIKAWA: I think we were rather fortunate. The school is right across from here. Do you see that building there?

NOGUCHI: Yeah.

ISHIKAWA: It is now a Buddhist church or something.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh . I sure did.

- ISHIKAWA: I went to school that was just two-room classes--the first grade to eighth grade. First to fourth grades in Room 1 and fifth to eighth in Room 2.
We were not segregated like Florin.
- NOGUCHI: Yes, I see.
- ISHIKAWA: Besides, by the time I went to school I'd say 60 to 80% were orientals in school.
- NOGUCHI: Oh.
- ISHIKAWA: That's right.
- NOGUCHI: So then quite a few of the Nihonjin people had moved into this area after your father arrived here.
- ISHIKAWA: You know Tosh Hamataka?
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, Tosh?
- ISHIKAWA: He used to live right here.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. And so as far as your classmates then-- most --lot of them were Nihonjin kids then.
- ISHIKAWA: That's right.
- NOGUCHI: Oh.
- ISHIKAWA: A great majority of them were.
- NOGUCHI: Did you remember your school teachers?
- ISHIKAWA: Yes.

NOGUCHI: How did she get along with the Nihonjins?

ISHIKAWA: Very good.

NOGUCHI: Because I think like Al and Mary--they talk very affectionately about their school teachers in Florin and Paul Takehara said the same thing--that the school teachers kind of held the kids together.

ISHIKAWA: Well, I was real fortunate with my teachers. They didn't show any prejudices. I doubt if they were prejudiced.

NOGUCHI: So you never had to face this situation with your fellow students to the word, "Jap".

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: Or any kind of racial discrimination?

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: Because a lot of that comes down from the parents. Parents think that way so naturally the kids get influenced by it. So you didn't go through any of that?

ISHIKAWA: I think I was rather fortunate.

NOGUCHI: Yes, you were. So you went through what--how many grades here to this school?

ISHIKAWA: Eighth grade.

NOGUCHI: Oh, eighth grade.

- ISHIKAWA: Then I went to the Sacramento school--Sutter Junior High.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, Sutter Junior High.
- ISHIKAWA: Then Sacramento High School.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, that's quite a ways from here to go to Sutter.
- ISHIKAWA: What happened is--as we're going, my sister went to Sacramento High School and Sacramento Junior College and we all tagged along because we were all going in the same car. That's how I got to go to Sacramento High School instead of going to Elk Grove. I was in the Elk Grove district.
- NOGUCHI: You are in the Elk Grove district.
- ISHIKAWA: Many went to Sacramento schools from around here.
- :
- Most of the people in Taishoku went to Sacramento High School.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's right. So this area is called--considered Taishoku or. . .
- ISHIKAWA: Florin.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, Florin.
- ISHIKAWA: Paul Takehara went to Sacramento High School.
- NOGUCHI: Yes.
- ISHIKAWA: He just lived up there not too far from here.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's right. So when you were going to grammar school then everything was pretty much on an even keel then? So you didn't get into fights and battles with the kids at all?

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's fortunate. Did you participate in the activities--with the sports activity?

ISHIKAWA: Oh, yeah, baseball--basketball.

NOGUCHI: Baseball, basketball--so you were one of the stars then, huh?

ISHIKAWA: Not the star but tagged along.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's good. Did you continue your sports when you entered high school?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: What was your favorite sport or the one that you were best in?

ISHIKAWA: Baseball, I would say.

NOGUCHI: Baseball. What position did you play?

ISHIKAWA: I caught for junior high and high school. But by the junior, senior year, I quit the sports because homelife getting tough, you know. By the time you're 13 or 14 years old you are able to work.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, yeah, you are needed on the farm, yeah. But you did enjoy your sports then. Because catching is the hardest position to play.

ISHIKAWA: Especially in junior high--I mean Sutter Junior High. I did play quite a bit of baseball.

NOGUCHI: So did you take part in other school activities too?

ISHIKAWA: Not too much.

NOGUCHI: Not too much. So when you got to Sutter Junior High School, did they have any problems there? Or did you get along pretty good with the kids?

ISHIKAWA: I got along pretty good.

NOGUCHI: They didn't give you any problems because of your being Japanese ancestry?

ISHIKAWA: I think during our time, prejudice wasn't such a big deal.

NOGUCHI: They didn't kind of openly come out and say things or do things then?

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: That's very good because so much of this in other interviews we find that some of our Niseis--older Niseis were faced with this situation where they were being picked on because they were of Japanese ancestry.

ISHIKAWA: Florin school was worse than we were because they were segregated.

NOGUCHI: So that mileage made all the difference in the world because of the school that you went to.

ISHIKAWA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: And the school that the people in Florin went to. The people's attitude was different. Were there very many homes in this area when you were growing up?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, all this street here--all were Nihonjins.

NOGUCHI: This street was all Japanese?

ISHIKAWA: Elder Creek.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Elder Creek was and they all lived---

ISHIKAWA: You know the Kurimas. . .

NOGUCHI: Yeah, Kurimas Monchan.

ISHIKAWA: Hamatakas--two Hamatakas?

NOGUCHI: Oh, two Hamataka's. Who was that one?

ISHIKAWA: Tosh's uncle.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Tosh's uncle was here too.

ISHIKAWA: And Ouchidas--you know the Ouchidas.

NOGUCHI: Tosh's family?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. Mukai family and the Hirokawas. You know the insurance agent, George Hirokawa? Placerville?

NOGUCHI: That one I don't know.

ISHIKAWA: And we have the Muratas, Hiraga. There were all Japanese around here.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Within that community, there were quite a few Hakujins living in this area too?

ISHIKAWA: Not too many. This area was dominated by Japanese.

NOGUCHI: Not too many.

And they all grew Tokay?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: No strawberries?

ISHIKAWA: Well, strawberries came later on.

NOGUCHI: Oh, they came later, oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: Just prior to the war.

NOGUCHI: So strawberries wasn't something that started way back when the Isseis arrived.

ISHIKAWA: Small patches but just before the war, it really flourished.

NOGUCHI: That's interesting.

ISHIKAWA: Mostly grapes when I was real young.

NOGUCHI: Where did you get the grapes to get it started?

ISHIKAWA: That's a good question.

NOGUCHI: I often wondered where did they get the original vines from?

ISHIKAWA: What I remember is that the grapes were there and to increase the crop-- you make your own roots, you cut your shoot (branch) , put it in the

ground--half year later they've got roots on them. Then you replant it.

That's how you replaced bad poor grapes.

NOGUUCHI: But when you think about it, when your mom and dad came over here they didn't have any grapes with them. . .

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUUCHI: . . . and they had only their suitcases. You wonder where and how did they get the grapevines?

ISHIKAWA: The grapevines were produced--already here.

NOGUUCHI: By the Hakujins?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, so they were available.

NOGUUCHI: No problem. Because they talked about forming a co-op later but that's when the Niseis were kind of taking over. But prior to that I guess people like Franzanetti that were here early --could they have been responsible for providing the grapes and plants for the Issei parents?

ISHIKAWA: I imagine so.

NOGUUCHI: So there was a close tie between the Italians and the Japanese?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. I knew Mr. Franzanetti quite well.

NOGUUCHI: Oh, you did.

ISHIKAWA: They used to take our grapes to the winery--take our grapes in and comeback with wine, you know. My dad used to like to drink wine.

NOGUCHI: So that was one of his vices then--drinking wine. That's good because they needed something. Because most of our Issei parents drank sake anyway. So was there any Italian family or any other families that you were pretty close to then?

ISHIKAWA: My neighbor was a German family.

NOGUCHI: Oh, a German family.

ISHIKAWA: They were real nice.

NOGUCHI: Are they still here?

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: Oh, they're gone. So they were there before your mom and dad arrived then?

ISHIKAWA: His dad used to own the land and the son did quite well.

NOGUCHI: Did your dad purchase the land from this German family then?

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: From another source.

ISHIKAWA: He didn't talk too much about that.

NOGUCHI: So you just raised Tokay grapes here then?

ISHIKAWA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Your dad?

ISHIKAWA: Uh huh.

- NOGUCHI: And the market was--where did they market the grapes to?
- ISHIKAWA: They took it to Florin.
- NOGUCHI: Florin, not Sacramento? You took it to Florin. So your transportation was--by the time your dad was here was it horse and buggy or was it by car?
- ISHIKAWA: By car.
- NOGUCHI: By car. You were wealthy enough to buy a car. How old?
- ISHIKAWA: I was old enough to drive a car.
- NOGUCHI: Does your sister talk about what they did as far as transporting the grapes to Florin?
- ISHIKAWA: Not too much.
- NOGUCHI: They did all the work on the farm. So it does involve quite a bit of work. You had what--about thirty acres of grapes here?
- ISHIKAWA: Right.
- NOGUCHI: It's kind of a seasonal thing though, huh. You have your break during the winter time.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, that's the only time.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's the only time.
- ISHIKAWA: We had another farm in Elk Grove too.
- NOGUCHI: Who had that one then?

- ISHIKAWA: We used to commute.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, you used to commute. So you had to have a car.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, about six miles from here.
- NOGUCHI: So the good old Model T came in handy.
- ISHIKAWA: Oh, yeah. I used to drive Model T all the time. [LAUGHTER]
- NOGUCHI: Very reliable though--even with the crank.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, crank and kicking. Crank used to kick.
- NOGUCHI: I knew a guy that-- I knew Niseis that used to break their wrists because they didn't let go of it fast enough and. . .
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, you hang on to it.
- NOGUCHI: So did your mom and dad--they didn't really have to struggle then. They did quite well then.
- ISHIKAWA: Fortunately, I think they did OK.
- NOGUCHI: Had no hardships.
- ISHIKAWA: I was in school. Then my brother --he was the only one that went to the university. We all went to junior college. We all finished junior college. He was the only one that--that was close to war time anyway. That was the time I had to stay home--finish school. The object was that Niseis--oldest would go first and they in turn help afterward.
- NOGUCHI: Did he finish his law degree after the war?

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: Before the war.

ISHIKAWA: He was post graduate from. . .

NOGUCHI: From Boalt Hall.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's one of the prestigious law schools in California.

ISHIKAWA: He finished that in 1941. Then he went to Fresno to practice.

NOGUCHI: Was there any special reason why he went to Fresno to practice?

ISHIKAWA: Better opportunities, I imagine.

NOGUCHI: Because before the war, I think Sacramento only had what--the only person was Henry Taketa.

ISHIKAWA: Walter Tsukamoto.

NOGUCHI: Oh, WalterTsukamoto, right.

ISHIKAWA: Fresno had only one--Attorney Slocum.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: So he went down there.

NOGUCHI: So was he practicing law by himself?

ISHIKAWA: Yes, he was practicing by himself. Then he got drafted in 1941.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. And then he went with the 442nd or was he. . .

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, he served in 442.

NOGUCHI: 442. And how many years was he overseas?

ISHIKAWA: He came back in 1945, I suppose.

NOGUCHI: Then he went right back to Fresno?

ISHIKAWA: Right.

NOGUCHI: To take up . . .

ISHIKAWA: To take up where he left off.

NOGUCHI: So you came back from Cleveland in what year then?

ISHIKAWA: Oh, I went into service.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you went into service too? What year were you drafted then?

ISHIKAWA: 1945.

NOGUCHI: Oh, 1945. Early '45, and where did you take your basic training?

ISHIKAWA: I was inducted at Camp Atterberry by Indianapolis and got my training in Texas.

NOGUCHI: Fort Bliss?

ISHIKAWA: No, Camp Fannin.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Camp Fannin. Where's that?

ISHIKAWA: That's by Tyler, Texas.

NOGUCHI: Tyler, Texas. Is that infantry?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you were in the infantry then.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. It must have been the worst camp in the United States because that was the first camp they closed.

NOGUCHI: Is that right? Oh, you don't hear too much about that camp. Hot and dusty.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. First time I've seen oil wells in people's back yard.

[LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: That's right. So you were drafted in Indianapolis. They sent you to Texas.

ISHIKAWA: I was inducted in Indianapolis.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: So I was not quite a year in Texas.

NOGUCHI: Oh, in Texas. What type of work assignment did you have in Texas?

ISHIKAWA: Well, I finished all my basics and everything and was waiting for my assignment, and the war was just about finished and then they sent me to train GIs to shoot. I was quite a marksman.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you were instructor for riflemen.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. Then my parents were pretty old by then so the Red Cross got in and got me out of the service after not quite a year of service.

NOGUCHI: So you got a hardship discharge. So you spent your entire career in Texas.

ISHIKAWA: Right [LAUGHTER] Talk about prejudice--those Southern people are. . .

NOGUCHI: Pretty prejudiced there. They didn't treat you too well. Especially when you go out or leave camp --basic camp or . .

ISHIKAWA: They don't like Northerners--Californians.

NOGUCHI: So did you have any bad experiences when you went out of the camp?

ISHIKAWA: No, not particularly. You can see that.

NOGUCHI: Any kind of verbal insults or anything?

ISHIKAWA: No verbal insults. They ignore you.

NOGUCHI: How about when you went into a restaurant? Did they put you with the whites or did they put you with the blacks?

ISHIKAWA: No, I always went with fellow soldiers so what can they do?

I hear some people did--got chased out, but we never did.

NOGUCHI: Is that right. Oh, that's good.

ISHIKAWA: I was the only Japanese with them.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, right.

ISHIKAWA: Most of them were Northerners and the Southerners don't like the Northerners so what can they do? I imagine if I went with a bunch of orientals I may have encountered some problems.

NOGUCHI: Was there any other Nisei soldier there with you?

ISHIKAWA: There were four or five.

NOGUCHI: Four or five. Did you ever go to dinner-- go out of camp?

ISHIKAWA: No, I never did because we were all in different units
although I used to see them, you know.

NOGUCHI: Was there any black soldier in your unit?

ISHIKAWA: No, not in my unit.

NOGUCHI: None at all?

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: Were there any in other camps there?

ISHIKAWA: There were some. Very few at that time.

NOGUCHI: That's interesting when you think about--even during the Korean war. . .

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

NOGUCHI: [This is Woody Ishikawa] and Kinya Noguchi. We will continue by telling Woody about my experience with racial prejudice in the South. I was taking basic training at Fort Lee, Virginia, and there was one northern black that was in our outfit, and we decided that we would go to Richmond, Virginia from Fort Lee, and we got into the bus station and we bought our tickets, and then we got into the bus. The bus driver would refuse to drive the bus until the black soldiers went to the back of

the bus. So there was one soldier in our outfit--GI in our outfit-- from Pennsylvania and he was a Quaker and he went to the bus driver and told the bus driver, "If you don't let that black soldier up front with us, I'll bodily throw you out of the bus and I'll drive this bus to Richmond." And this was in 1951. And so the bus driver said, "Well, I guess I can drive. If I get fired it's your fault." We said we'll take the blame. We took off for Richmond. But that black soldier's jaws just dropped when he was told that he was to go to the back of the bus. So I can just feel that the racial--racism that was going on even in 1951.

ISHIKAWA: Well, discrimination--I never realized what discrimination was until I went to Jerome, Arkansas.

NOGUCHI: Is that right?

ISHIKAWA: That's right. You know, we used to read all about the South, you know, about discrimination. We were young yet. It was exaggerated or something. Until I went to Jerome and saw the conditions I was just amazed once I got out--drink water in different fountain even.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, because you actually--you got to leave camp. You were in a position to leave camp. Oh, I see. Then you saw how the people were living in that area.

ISHIKAWA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Was Jerome near a town?

ISHIKAWA: Pine Bluff.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Pine Bluff. How was the attitude of the Caucasian and blacks towards you and the Japanese people that were permitted to leave camp?

ISHIKAWA: I never did associate with the outside life so it's hard to say.

NOGUCHI: So they would stay away from you or they avoided you.

ISHIKAWA: Only thing I could see is what they told us --water fountains are black and white.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: I had an occasion where I rode a bus and the blacks all marched right to the back

NOGUCHI: Uh huh . Oh, you did.

ISHIKAWA: I didn't know any better. I sat in the front They didn't say anything.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

ISHIKAWA: So that was my real taste of discrimination.

NOGUCHI: How did the blacks react to you?

ISHIKAWA: We didn't have too many blacks around there.

NOGUCHI: Oh, just a few.

ISHIKAWA: They just looked at us and go about what they were doing. It's a different world down South. I hope it changed a lot.

NOGUCHI: I'm sure it has--being that our new president is from Arkansas. I think he has a different outlook on people in general. Because after segregation we've had quite a few people come to Tule Lake from Jerome and Rohwer, and they talked about the whites and their attitudes. They weren't aware that there were Nihonjins in California, so when they looked at the Nihonjins there, their first observation was that were these Indians. They didn't look like Hakujins, they didn't look like blacks, so that was some of the comments that were made by some of the Niseis that came to Tule Lake from Jerome. People living in that area couldn't understand who we were or why we were there until it was explained to them that we were Japanese and that we were at war with Japan. So you can imagine how ignorant these people were and, usually, the ignorant people are the ones that are prejudiced anyway. So how long were you in Jerome then?

ISHIKAWA: I'm going to kind of revert back. Let's see--we were in camp in '42--1944. . .

NOGUCHI: Oh, '44. Did you--how did you feel when you were in camp then? What was your situation as to being in a war with Japan. Your personal feelings anyway?

ISHIKAWA: I think one of the worst feeling I had in my life that I'll never forget when we had to leave our farm [was] my parents' unbelievable expression.

That feeling I'll never forget.

NOGUCHI: How did your parents feel about giving up this property --this farm--just being uprooted and leaving? Did they ever talk about that?

ISHIKAWA: I think they were just kind of numb. Hard to express it but, you know, when they don't talk about it, you know that inside they were hurt. By that time they were married 34 years--their lives were Americanized.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, because your father being able to speak English well. How about your mom--did she speak English quite well?

ISHIKAWA: Yes, she went to a religious school in Japan and she learned her English in Japan. They both spoke pretty good English. They conversed with their neighbors--no problems.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's good. It's kind of a real lost feeling when you have to give up your home and just leave. Did you have any pets or anything that you had to leave behind?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, my neighbor over here took care of them

NOGUCHI: You had a dog or cats or something?

ISHIKAWA: A dog.

- NOGUCHI: Oh, you had a car too?
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, well, new is year and a half or so.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's still new when you think about it.
- ISHIKAWA: If you only had to pay less than a \$1000.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's right.
- ISHIKAWA: I think I had a Chevrolet.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, that was your pride and joy.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah.
- NOGUCHI: Because, you know, in those days not too many Nihonjin families had a new car, you know.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, we somehow survived. I guess the more--the older I get the more I think about the Isseis. You've got to give them credit.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, it's amazing. I think one of the words that we--it's very significant now and we use it only on certain occasions but the word, "gaman."
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah.
- NOGUCHI: It becomes more and more symbolic of our Issei parents who have had to endure from the time they arrived from Japan until they passed away. I mean times got better after the war but still they had an uphill battle all the way.

ISHIKAWA: We appreciate the Isseis but life for them, you know, they used to get drunk on New Year's Day-- quite a few of them. Now days, I think, gee whiz, that was nice of them to let it all out.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, once a year.

ISHIKAWA: Us younger--in our generation, we go out all the time. They had nothing to go out for--spring time picnic, good feast on New Year's--that's all they had. So what they worried about was their kids.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's right, and their education. So were you involved in the church activities too? Your parents?

ISHIKAWA: My mother was quite active in the Florin church. My father was closest to an atheist, I suppose. [LAUGHTER] My mother was really religious.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. So you kind of gotsu-gotsu then. [LAUGHTER]

"I know more than the Bonsan so why should I go to church?"

[[LAUGHTER] His philosophy was, "I went to enough school to know." "OK, Pop, that's OK."

So your mom did take a pretty active part in the Florin Japanese church.

Did you know the Tsukamoto's at that time?

ISHIKAWA: Al?

NOGUCHI: Al and Mary?

ISHIKAWA: Yes, we knew them quite well. Although we lived on this side of the river, we knew them quite well--always met them in church and social gatherings.

NOGUCHI: Was there some kind of rivalry between Florin ball players and the Taishoku or Perkins ball players? I know they used to have sumo and baseball and basketball.

ISHIKAWA: They used to play against each other.

NOGUCHI: Because I know Florin in those days had some pretty good ball players.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. The rivalry between Florin and Sacramento was bigger than anything else.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's true. It kind of spilled over after the war too.

[LAUGHTER] So when you left camp, went into the army and then you were discharged, and you came home, then where did you meet Mary?

ISHIKAWA: I knew Mary.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you knew Mary.

ISHIKAWA: I knew Mary in camp.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you did.

ISHIKAWA: She was also in Cleveland.

NOGUCHI: Oh. So the romance started way back then.

- ISHIKAWA: Let's say I knew her quite well a long time ago.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. Did you date a lot or . . .
- ISHIKAWA: Well, normal amount, I suppose.
- NOGUCHI: Now, come on, Woody, you could tell me. [LAUGHTER]
- ISHIKAWA: She was living in Redwood City at that time. She came back.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, Redwood City. Did you correspond? Call her?
- ISHIKAWA: I used to go there quite often.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. So you dated her quite a bit then before you got married?
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah.
- NOGUCHI: So how long did it take you to propose to her then? [LAUGHTER] I know this is personal. This is your story, Woody, so I have to ask you questions.
- ISHIKAWA: Well, let's see, we got married in 1950.
- NOGUCHI: I have to kind of spice up this tape because this is Woody's tape.
[LAUGHTER]
- ISHIKAWA: We had a lot of good times together.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, that's good. I noticed you danced a lot in those days too. I know you are quite a dancer.
- ISHIKAWA: I used to dance but I really started dancing after later in life.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: Dancing to me now is good physical exercise.

NOGUCHI: It is. I should do it but I get all tightened up when I go trying to learn a new step and. . .

ISHIKAWA: I'm 75 and I'm still learning. I'm still going to classes now.

NOGUCHI: That's great. They still have a class on Wednesdays at the Nisei Hall and Helen has been trying to get me to go and I've been balking at it by making all kinds of excuses.

ISHIKAWA: You've got to do some round dancing.

NOGUCHI: What's that?

ISHIKAWA: Round dancing is a circle-like square dancing.

NOGUCHI: Oh, square dancing.

ISHIKAWA: Not square dancing--round dancing. Dr. Sugiyama goes.
You know Eddie Nakashima?

NOGUCHI: So you have a dance group then?

ISHIKAWA: There are about six couples--five or six.

NOGUCHI: So what did you do in Cleveland after you left camp? What kind of work was that?

ISHIKAWA: Actually an industry company used to make parts for B29s.

NOGUCHI: For B29s. So you were involved in the war effort then.

ISHIKAWA: Yes.

- NOGUCHI: So how long did you do that?
- ISHIKAWA: Well, I worked there during the summer and the fall and by January I was in the army--not too long.
- NOGUCHI: Not too long. They didn't say anything about your being Japanese that you couldn't work. . .
- ISHIKAWA: No.
- NOGUCHI: . . .in a war plant or anything?
- ISHIKAWA: No.
- NOGUCHI: So you didn't face any kind of racial discrimination in that area?
- ISHIKAWA: I was the only Nihonjin there. That's a very small company--say about fifty at the most?
- NOGUCHI: None of the co-workers say anything about your being Japanese? Didn't ask where you were or what you were doing here?
- ISHIKAWA: No.
- NOGUCHI: They didn't ask?
- ISHIKAWA: No, they never did.
- NOGUCHI: How did they treat you?
- ISHIKAWA: Just like any other people.
- NOGUCHI: Is that right? So they were all pretty fair people then.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah. Population up in Cleveland got a lot of foreigners.

NOGUCHI: By foreigners you mean European foreigners?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah,.

NOGUCHI: So there were-- a lot of them were first generation Europeans then?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. They were in the older age group. Of course, the younger ones were already in the service. So as far as that part is considered I was rather fortunate in my life.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, it is. Especially going out of camp like that and working in a war plant and not having to face all that discrimination. You were very fortunate.

ISHIKAWA: So I read that in big towns where we had five or six Japanese in one group trying to work with somebody-- then they get discriminated or something.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

ISHIKAWA: If only one.

NOGUCHI: They kind of go along with it.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, I think so.

NOGUCHI: They feel--I guess it's because they don't feel threatened.

ISHIKAWA: I don't know why.

NOGUCHI: The numbers seem to bother people so. . .

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, that's what I was trying to say too.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's true, very true.

ISHIKAWA: And then you're involved with more older people--probably didn't even know what a Japanese is.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that is true but they never asked about why you were in the service or anything?

ISHIKAWA: No.

NOGUCHI: Did they ask you, "Were you in camp?"

ISHIKAWA: Although as soon as I started working I got my notice. Hey, I'm going to be inducted pretty soon. [LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: They never asked you where you came from?

ISHIKAWA: They knew where I came from.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: I told them I got kicked out of California. Most of them didn't even know what evacuation was.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's true. To this day there are people that don't know that that ever happened.

ISHIKAWA: Some of them probably thought I was shooting the bull. [LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: That's true too, yeah. They had their doubts.

ISHIKAWA: My kid teaches in Elk Grove, you know. Elk Grove School District.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he teaches school.

ISHIKAWA: He's got a very good friend-- he says, "Gee whiz, never knew what evacuation was." This is a teacher. Now, he's teaching.

NOGUCHI: What grade does he teach?

ISHIKAWA: He's at the middle school--seventh and eighth.

NOGUCHI: Seventh and eighth--Joseph Kerr--right on the main drag there.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: What does he teach?

ISHIKAWA: He teaches science.

NOGUCHI: Oh, science.

ISHIKAWA: He's also chairman of activities so most of his work is in activities-- school activities.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. Getting back to you and Mary again--you were telling me about how you got to know her --that you knew her from before and that she was living in the Bay Area. And then it took how many years for you to gather up the courage to ask her to marry you? Woody?

ISHIKAWA: Oh, well, we got back at '45--'46 or '47 or '48. [LAUGHTER] That's about it.

NOGUCHI: Did you say from the first, "Will you marry me?" or was it kind of subtle?

ISHIKAWA: It's long gone.

NOGUCHI: She was just waiting though, huh?

ISHIKAWA: I don't know.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's good. Did you get married in Sacramento?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: And where was she living?

ISHIKAWA: She was living in Redwood City at that time. So we got a Buddhist ceremony--Rev. Sasaki. Then my mother converted her to be a Methodist.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: She was pretty active in the Methodist Church.

NOGUCHI: Rev. Sasaki married Helen and myself. She's a Methodist.

ISHIKAWA: In fact, we went to church together. Was Helen maid of honor for George Dakuzaku?

NOGUCHI: Yes. And Grace, because they're cousins.

ISHIKAWA: I was the usher in that.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you were the usher. Small world, huh.

ISHIKAWA: George and I used to bowl together.

NOGUCHI: George is quite a bowler too.

ISHIKAWA: He's got arthritis just like me.

NOGUCHI: We all have that though. It's amazing, you know. I know ten guys that have arthritis in one place or another.

So when you got married, did you move to--were you living in Sacramento and. . .

ISHIKAWA: All my life.

NOGUCHI: Right here. By then, were your parents passed away?

ISHIKAWA: No, my parents--my dad passed away in 1951 and my mother passed away in 1975.

NOGUCHI: Oh, she lived quite a bit after your dad passed away. Because of age difference?

ISHIKAWA: Let's see--my father was 78 when he passed away. My mother was 85.

NOGUCHI: Eighty-five. That's about the same as my parents. My father was 73 when he passed away. There were 14 years difference in age so she was 88 when she passed away.

ISHIKAWA: That's the same.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's the same. He was one of those hard heads, a very outspoken person. [LAUGHTER]

ISHIKAWA: I think it's best to be hard-headed than being. . .

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's true.

ISHIKAWA: I can't stand these people that are. . .

- NOGUCHI: Wishy-washy.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, wishy-washy.
- NOGUCHI: Honto yo. So did Mary work out on the farm or did she go to town to work?
- ISHIKAWA: She worked out on the farm for a while.
- NOGUCHI: For a while.
- ISHIKAWA: Not long. Then she ended up working for Mather.
- NOGUCHI: At Mather, what did she do out there?
- ISHIKAWA: Accounting Department.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, the accounting section. And you worked out on the farm until how long?
- ISHIKAWA: '56 and then I went to McClellan.
- NOGUCHI: You went to McClellan. So she went to Mather and you went to McClellan.
- ISHIKAWA: She was working at Mather before I went to McClellan. That's when I gave up farming.
- NOGUCHI: Then you went--what year did you go to work at McClellan?
- ISHIKAWA: '56, I think.
- NOGUCHI: '56?
- ISHIKAWA: '56-'57 somewhere in there.

NOGUCHI: What section did you work in?

ISHIKAWA: Controller's.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Controller's.

ISHIKAWA: I worked on the computers. I was the first computer technician when it started around '55 - '56. I was one of the early birds.

NOGUCHI: Yeah. Was Tom Sasaki out there when you were there? Or was he. . .

ISHIKAWA: I got to know him out there.

NOGUCHI: You got to know him . . .

ISHIKAWA: Tom, George Imai--we worked together.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you did. Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: George was supervisor on one shift and I was supervisor on another.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: Tom was in programming.

NOGUCHI: Oh, programming.

ISHIKAWA: That's how I got to know him.

NOGUCHI: And what section was Kuni in then?

ISHIKAWA: I don't know.

NOGUCHI: Did you get to know him?

ISHIKAWA: No, I knew who he was.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you knew who he was. He was quite active in the area where . . .

- ISHIKAWA: He was quite active in EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity].
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, in human relations part where he was trying to get affirmative action going. It's quite interesting how he was involved in that.
- ISHIKAWA: I knew who he was but I didn't know him good until we were in the same dance class.
- NOGUCHI: So what year did you retire then?
- ISHIKAWA: '79.
- NOGUCHI: '79.
- ISHIKAWA: Retired fourteen years already.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, so you've been enjoying it since.
- ISHIKAWA: I was busy because I used to golf a lot and now this is the first year I cut down on my golfing. I'm waiting for good weather to golf again. When I was working I golfed a lot.
- NOGUCHI: End of tape here. So when was your son born then, David?
- ISHIKAWA: 1952.
- NOGUCHI: 1952. Let's see, I was drafted in the Korean war. . . . He's the only son?
- ISHIKAWA: Yes.
- NOGUCHI: One son.
- ISHIKAWA: I have a grandson in Seattle going to art school and a granddaughter going to McClatchy.

NOGUCHI: Oh. They commute from here to McClatchy?

ISHIKAWA: No. He and his first wife separated.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: Stays downtown--comes here during weekends.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. So he went to school where then--for his teacher's. . .

ISHIKAWA: David?

NOGUCHI: Yes.

ISHIKAWA: He went to Elk Grove. Then he graduated. He's a teacher over there.

NOGUCHI: Is that right.

ISHIKAWA: At Joseph Kerr Middle School.

NOGUCHI: He's an instructor at Elk Grove school there?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: So he's been there for quite a while then.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. He's been there for 15 years already--instructor out there--
something like that.

He finished Sacramento State in June. Now, he's teaching in Elk Grove.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: That was fortunate.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, because everybody puts in their application in all the schools and keep their fingers crossed that they will get tenure anyway. So he's very comfortable in Elk Grove.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. He enjoys kids.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's good.

ISHIKAWA: He's a boy scout leader.

NOGUCHI: So you didn't go back to being a boy scouts troop?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, until David was 15 when he got his Eagle. I was pretty active. I used to be head of the Order of the Arrow. I used to be in charge in Sacramento.

NOGUCHI: He was in a troop over here then?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, we had a troop in school.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. Was he the only Nihonjin? Or were there quite a few Nihonjins?

ISHIKAWA: Lots of Nihonjins.

NOGUCHI: Lot of Nihonjins. Because in Sacramento they had their own troops there--250 and 50. I think some of them were from this area that used to go downtown to. . .

[End Tape 1, Side B]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

NOGUCHI: This is Tape No. 2, Side 1, interview with Woody Ishikawa, March 30, 1993. We are going to continue the interview by asking Woody about his grandson who is presently attending school in Washington.

ISHIKAWA: Right.

NOGUCHI: And he is studying to be. . .

ISHIKAWA: Seattle Art School.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Seattle Art School and what is that?

ISHIKAWA: Private school.

NOGUCHI: Oh, private school. Is it designing or is it. . .

ISHIKAWA: All phases of art.

NOGUCHI: All phases of art. One of those prestigious schools.

ISHIKAWA: They said it is pretty prestigious over there.

NOGUCHI: And he is a freshman or. . .

ISHIKAWA: No, he's graduating.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he's graduating.

ISHIKAWA: He's graduating in June. He is now working on his portfolio.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: He's graduating in September, I suppose. He likes it up there.

NOGUCHI: Is he planning to stay up there?

ISHIKAWA: I don't know. All depends on a job up there.

NOGUCHI: Is the other girl--daughter still going to school?

ISHIKAWA: Right. McClatchy High.

NOGUCHI: So at this point in life then, you are enjoying your grandchildren and your son and you've been taking up golfing for quite a while and you are a dance expert.

ISHIKAWA: [LAUGHTER] Not an expert. I go for my physical exercise. It's hard work. That thing is hard work, you know.

NOGUCHI: It is. It's good for you. It's just like aerobics, you know.

ISHIKAWA: Especially round dancing, it's hard work.

NOGUCHI: It really keeps you moving.

ISHIKAWA: Of course, Country Western is hard work too.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, I know. [LAUGHTER]

ISHIKAWA: Lot's of fun though. You get to meet people.

NOGUCHI: Are you involved with the Florin JACL --after the war?

ISHIKAWA: For a while I was until it died down.

NOGUCHI: And what part of JACL did you get involved?

ISHIKAWA: I was President around 1949 when we got the money.

NOGUCHI: Oh, yeah, ten cents on a dollar.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, I was President at that time so I used to attend quite a few meetings.

- NOGUCHI: So the Florin JACL played quite an active role in that portion of the . . .
- ISHIKAWA: Within the Florin area, yeah.
- NOGUCHI: Within the Florin area because I remember Henry Taketa was very helpful in--especially those people who lost personal property at the --the Issei people that couldn't speak English that well, he was being kind of a legal-aide type of a person in assisting these people getting their money. I can remember that part of the JACL function in those days. So you were the President of Florin JACL in the early '50s then?
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, at that time. I don't remember what years they were unless I check it out.
- NOGUCHI: Did Mary play an active role in . . .
- ISHIKAWA: Not too much.
- NOGUCHI: Not too much. Just you, huh?
- ISHIKAWA: At that Florin--JACL died down for quite a while.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, it did, huh. It sort of revived in recent years.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah.
- NOGUCHI: I guess that was through the efforts of Mary Tsukamoto and her crew.
- ISHIKAWA: I think all around. Sacramento too was pretty inactive.
- NOGUCHI: Yeah, it was kind of on a down slide.
- ISHIKAWA: And then ten years later they started talking about redress.

NOGUCHI: Especially around in the late '70s and early '80s. The third year legal students started writing up the documents and preparing the documents for this redress. Do you still take a pretty active part in the JACL?

ISHIKAWA: No, not anymore--just help them.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you're one of those. They need that kind of people too to do all that work in the background anyway.

ISHIKAWA: The JACL has to have their youth movement.

NOGUCHI: That's true--very true. But they still need the guidance of the senior people too because their experience is something that they can only get in the years to come and these people like Mary and you--some of the other older JACL people that do give that support and advice and that experience to kind of solidify the JACL because you can't just run it on young people.

ISHIKAWA: They are showing more interest now.

NOGUCHI: They do. They have the young and the old so that makes a good combination and they seem to work very well in Florin. In fact, I think at the last Time of Remembrance they made a statement that Florin was the most active chapter in the United States which is something that Florin can be very proud of.

So you've been a member of the JACL from even before the war,
then.

ISHIKAWA: Oh, yeah. I remember we went to a Monterey meeting and Mike
Masaoka became our secretary.

NOGUCHI: Oh, what year was that?

ISHIKAWA: '39-'40, somewhere around there.

NOGUCHI: '39.

ISHIKAWA: '40. That's when I first met him.

NOGUCHI: So who was active at that time besides you and Al?

ISHIKAWA: Tubby Tsukamoto. Sam. You know Sam?

NOGUCHI: Yes, yes, I knew Sam.

ISHIKAWA: And the Miyao brothers. There weren't too many actives. Kashiwagi
picked it up during that long season

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: He was president for a long time. Nobody took the job.

NOGUCHI: It's difficult to try to find somebody that would take that responsibility. I
know it's a big headache. So you took it for one term--two terms?

ISHIKAWA: I took it for two terms. I think.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, I see. Two terms, that's good.

ISHIKAWA: Terms were flexible at that time.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, I see. That was the time when Mas Satow was pretty much leading the JACL in San Francisco and Edison Uno.

ISHIKAWA: Grant Masaoka.

NOGUCHI: I met Grant too.

ISHIKAWA: He was quite a go getter.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, very much so.

ISHIKAWA: He was a great asset to the Nisei.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, very much so. And there was a fellow named Yoshimura from Marysville and he was in the cleaner business.

ISHIKAWA: My nephew is pretty active in Fresno.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. Today Fresno has quite an active group because they must have a lot of good lobbyist in Washington because their keynote speaker is always Senator Inouye or somebody way up there. It's hard to get those people, you know, to come to speak at any function here in Sacramento.

ISHIKAWA: My nephew is a lawyer too.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he is. That's good. So you have your son who is a school teacher; your nephew is an attorney. Isn't that something though.

ISHIKAWA: Mary's niece is an attorney in New York City. So we got a lot of attorneys in the family.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, so as far as your legal problems, they can pretty much take care of them for you. [LAUGHTER]

ISHIKAWA: No, they're too far away.

NOGUCHI: Pretty much take care of your own, huh.

ISHIKAWA: Trying.

NOGUCHI: Can you tell me if there was anything that you can remember that is very clear in your life that happened to you that could be just yourself-- something exciting or something sad--that you experienced or that you were able to. . .

ISHIKAWA: No. As I first said the saddest thing in my life was when I had to leave here. I'll never forget that. That wound would never go away.

NOGUCHI: Yeah.

ISHIKAWA: And then happy moments --I had a lot of happy moments.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that's good.

ISHIKAWA: Because we generally try to schedule one good vacation a year to different places--Hawaii or Canada. We go to Canada quite often. One year we went to--we drove to the East Coast.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you did drive.

ISHIKAWA: For six - seven weeks. Good six weeks to travel around.

NOGUCHI: You did a lot of the driving then?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, both of us.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you took turns. What year was that?

ISHIKAWA: It must have been about ten years ago.

Driving--that's hard enjoyable work, you know.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, it is.

ISHIKAWA: Northern route.

NOGUCHI: Northern route? Because driving to places like Nevada and Utah--so boring. Yeah, I drove that one route once. I took two federal prisoners to Fort Collins in Colorado.

ISHIKAWA: I have a sister-in-law there.

NOGUCHI: Oh, is that right?

ISHIKAWA: Mary's sister lives there.

NOGUCHI: Oh, yeah.

ISHIKAWA: So we go there two or three times a year. Yeah, I drove that Nevada [LAUGHTER] Lucky those gambling houses.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's right. I got federal prisoners with us so--pretty hard --take them to jail there, get into a motel, get up early in the morning and take off again, you know.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, that's right. Twelve hours to Salt Lake City, twelve hours to Colorado.

NOGUCHI: It took us longer than that because we had to stop. It takes us a good hour to take them just to lunch because we had to handcuff them. We had to ask the restaurant to put us in an area where people wouldn't stare at us and they won't feel offended having to sit next to a federal prisoner so. . .

: People are--they mean well but they're curious, you know. They used to whisper, "What's that person in for?" "What did he do?" "Did he rob a bank?" "No," I said, "He broke into a post office." Embarrassing but you have to answer for them.

ISHIKAWA: You can't abuse them.

NOGUCHI: That's right.

ISHIKAWA: That's the dangerous part of it.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, we had to be so careful because although they were young, somehow we were careful enough, and in one of the restaurants one of the fellows when I shook him down before I put him beside me for the night in county jail within our travel there, he had a butter knife in his pocket. Can you imagine?

So did you ever experience any sad moments that you can recall?

ISHIKAWA: If I had more time I probably can recall a lot of things.

NOGUCHI: How did you feel when your mom and dad passed away then? Were they quite ill before they passed away?

ISHIKAWA: My dad--they both were kind of sick for a while. The first one really hit you hard when my dad passed away. Then when my mother passed away, I kind of expected it. She had that operation--colostomy operation.

NOGUCHI: Oh, uh huh.

ISHIKAWA: So when she had that, you could see that she gave up life. You kind of prepare yourself for three months--October--November--yeah, three months. So once you prepare yourself for that sort of thing you hate to see it come but. . .

NOGUCHI: Yes, that's right.

ISHIKAWA: It's much easier to cope. One that really hit me hard was my dad's death. But my mother's death I was better prepared for it. You've got to expect those things in life.

NOGUCHI: That's right.

ISHIKAWA: The first time is always the toughest.

NOGUCHI: It is.

ISHIKAWA: Unless my mother would have gone suddenly, then I'll probably be in shock. I think we all prepared ourselves.

NOGUCHI: So you were a very close-knit family then.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. I'm going to [].

NOGUCHI: So you did a lot of things together with your family--with your parents.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. Now that they are gone, you wished you had done more.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's very true.

ISHIKAWA: Money and time are nothing.

NOGUCHI: Your mom got to enjoy your grandchildren then?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: So how old was your grandson when your father passed away?

ISHIKAWA: Just born. He wasn't born yet. She was pregnant then. No, he died in September and David was born in January.

NOGUCHI: My dad--He didn't even know. He knew my sister was pregnant but he didn't know anything about my [].

ISHIKAWA: I remember telling my mother she should enjoy her life when grandchild comes. It's unfortunate that he passed away before that. He knew it was coming though.

NOGUCHI: Did he have a stroke or something?

ISHIKAWA: I think he actually had cancer.

NOGUCHI: Oh, cancer.

ISHIKAWA: They didn't tell him. Dr. Harada. . .

NOGUCHI: Oh, Dr. Harada.

ISHIKAWA: He didn't tell me. I suspected it. His heart was giving out too. At that time 78 was pretty old.

NOGUCHI: Yes, yes, very much so.

ISHIKAWA: Not now because 75 is prime.

: Yeah, you're still ready to go on.

NOGUCHI: That's true.

ISHIKAWA: My mother was in good health until her hearing went out on her. That lasted about three years. Then you could notice it going down.

NOGUCHI: Our Issei parents--their life expectancy was so much shorter than ours and yet with all that struggling though, they lived --a lot of them lived to a ripe old age--even as hard boiled as my father was he lived to 73 anyway. But what killed him was himself. He had all these series of strokes. That's why he couldn't talk anymore so when he couldn't talk anymore that did it. I think it holds true though--whether it was your parents or grandparents--nature-- illness was either cancer or heart or diabetes, one of those. It used to be the ones that caused death unless they lived to a ripe old age, they just died of old age.

ISHIKAWA: I remember hard times. I had a heart attack in 1985.

NOGUCHI: Did you have a heart attack? Is that when you went to the Caribbean?

ISHIKAWA: When did we go on the Caribbean?

NOGUCHI: Was that '85 when you went on the Caribbean cruise? Did you have--
was it after that or before that?

ISHIKAWA: You sure it was '85?

NOGUCHI: I'm not sure either, Woody. Somewhere around there. So you were
really bouncing around on that cruise.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah. I think '85 was when I had my heart attack-- June

NOGUCHI: On June of '85.

ISHIKAWA: I'll never forget that date too. I went to Lake Tahoe to celebrate my
wedding anniversary. Before 16, 17, or 18 was my anniversary. Heart
attack on the 18th

NOGUCHI: Oh, did it hit you pretty bad? Your heart attack?

ISHIKAWA: Kept me in the hospital for ten days.

NOGUCHI: Oh, ten days.

ISHIKAWA: I was scared then because people go out in seven days or usually.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that doesn't mean anything though.

ISHIKAWA: They were keeping me for ten days. I said, "When are you going to let
me out?" I didn't have any operation--all medication. I still take
medication.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you do.

ISHIKAWA: And I lost my eyesight. I'm blind in one eye.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you are?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: Was that through. . .

ISHIKAWA: Oh, it just happened. You know that I got a hole in my retina. I can see the outskirts--outline. I don't know who you [are].

NOGUCHI: I think my brother had the same thing. He tried to --he had something with his eyes where he had []. He's blind in one eye too. They tried to do something with a laser beam or something. And it didn't do too well.

ISHIKAWA: This happened about seven or eight years ago. The doctor said we can operate on it but your chances of getting good is 30% so that odds were not too good. At least I get peripheral vision. It helps in driving.

NOGUCHI: Oh, yeah.

ISHIKAWA: I have no direct contact but I have peripheral vision--outlines --with surgery I would lose that too. I didn't want to take that chance. Now, I understand it's about 50% chances of recovery. But at my age probably the ratio is down more so I got one good eye so. . .

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's right. That's what my brother says, "I still have one good eye. I'm going to drive and do everything I want to do."

- ISHIKAWA: They only gave me a two-year license or two-year license.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, two years license.
- ISHIKAWA: I think I had a bad examiner because lots of people have worse eye than me.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, yeah. That's right.
- ISHIKAWA: Then my arthritis got bad lately.
- NOGUCHI: Is it osteo?
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah.
- NOGUCHI: That's what they call old people's disease.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, Dr. Ozawa used to say if you live long enough, you're going to get arthritis, and then you will get cancer.
- NOGUCHI: That's right. Dr. Tsuji says the same thing.
- ISHIKAWA: You can't avoid everything. You live long enough you'll get this and that.
- NOGUCHI: Those are going to catch up with you.
- ISHIKAWA: Who is your doctor? Dr. Sugiyama?
- NOGUCHI: No, I have Kaiser, so up to recently I had a Hakujin doctor. Now, I have a Chinese doctor. I have been a Kaiser fan for a good 30 years now.
- ISHIKAWA: That's a good plan.

- NOGUCHI: It is. It's very good. People say it's an oversized clinic but you could choose your own doctor too so they've upgraded their Kaiser system. It's much better. If you're in real bad shape you are assigned your cardiologist. Other than that you kind of pick your own doctor treating you. They have a habit of retiring doctors earlier than the normal private practice doctors so you see them one day and then they say, "I'm going to retire." and then you can pick from the three they recommend. Oh, you seem to be in pretty good health otherwise though.
- ISHIKAWA: I go to the spa at least three times a week.
- NOGUCHI: Which one is that? Florin road?
- ISHIKAWA: Bradshaw
- NOGUCHI: Oh, Bradshaw.
- ISHIKAWA: Did you go over there?
- NOGUCHI: No. No, I've never been to that one. Is that one []?
- ISHIKAWA: No. This is on Jackson Road.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, Jackson Road. I think that's the one Yosh Murata goes.
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah.
- NOGUCHI: He has to go like I do, you know.
- ISHIKAWA: We got eight tennis courts indoors. It's a huge complex. The track's about quarter mile--six times you go around makes a mile--one-sixth of a

mile. You've got Olympian size swimming pool. It's pretty reasonable.

We only pay only \$35 a month for two of us, so I go there a lot everyday.

NOGUCHI: That's good.

ISHIKAWA: Walking is best for your heart.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, really. My feet hurt so bad that I got on the cycling and then step-stair walker--try to avoid that pounding the ground too much. So I use that in place of walking although I do walk a little bit but I walk my dogs but I do mostly on cycling, stair-walking.

ISHIKAWA: You can work in the swimming pool.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, I know, but I feel like I'm going to drown every time I go into the water--can't swim so. . .

ISHIKAWA: I don't swim either so I don't go in the big pool because the water is so cold. Every time it's cold I have to take nitro.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: But they got a small swimming pool.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

ISHIKAWA: That's good because my joints--I can't even move it, you know. In the water you can walk.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's right. I should too but I'm funny that way.

ISHIKAWA: Basically I can't swim. If I have to save my life I can float for a while.
You ever take that drill in the army where you take your pants off and
jump in the water?

NOGUCHI: [].

ISHIKAWA: Into the water with the gear on I almost drowned--gulp-gulp. I thought I
was a goner. "That's all right. That's all right!" [LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: Oh, is that right? Only thing we had to do was to --they give you a log
about this big around that goes across the pack. The minute you look
down, boy, you're going to fall in. The water was only this deep but,
boy, I didn't see so many guys fall.

ISHIKAWA: The one we practiced on was a regular swimming pool so. . .

NOGUCHI: I don't think Fort Lee had a swimming pool.

ISHIKAWA: Of course, the end was only four feet so as long as you don't get trapped
in the middle.

NOGUCHI: Gosh, yeah.

ISHIKAWA: That's where I got trapped-- kind of deep.

[LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: Oh, is that right? If it wasn't so far out, I would probably want to even
switch. I go to the one on South Land which used to be Jack La Lane, by

Lumberjack, Yuki's Restaurant on Florin Road. It's only about ten minutes from our place.

ISHIKAWA: Didn't that spa change its name?

NOGUCHI: Gee, I don't know.

It changed hands about three times since I started going there to Jack. It was Jack La Lane when I went there. I used to see him every now and then. Then it became a franchise. He sold it to somebody in Southern California. I mean Central California. Now it belongs to a corporate group.

[End Tape 2, Side A]

[Begin Tape 2, Side B]

NOGUCHI: This is Tape 2, Side 2. Interview with Woody Ishikawa, March 30, 1993, and we will continue the interview with Woody.

ISHIKAWA: There weren't too many Nihonjins there though.

NOGUCHI: Oh, is that right? Mostly Caucasian then?

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: Do you have a lot of weights and everything there?

ISHIKAWA: Oh, yeah, they have all the weights--they have lots of--oodles of bicycles. . .

NOGUCHI: . . .and euipment.

ISHIKAWA: . . .and they have massaging machine--hip, back, shoulder, etc.

NOGUCHI: They used to have it but it doesn't work so they took it out. So the equipment kind of--gets to a point where they can't repair it so they didn't replace it at all. I think they are kind of working on a limited budget so. . .

ISHIKAWA: They have a stair master. I think they all have stair masters.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, I use that a lot.

ISHIKAWA: They have quite a few swimming weekdays now. Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

NOGUCHI: Do they have co-ed or is it men's day and women's day?

ISHIKAWA: Co-ed.

NOGUCHI: Oh, it's co-ed. That means you got two sets of facilities for shower and everything.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah.

NOGUCHI: That's good. That facility was built quite a bit later and JackLa Lane was set up for men on one day and women for another because they don't have the segregated bathroom facility.

ISHIKAWA: We have no problem.

NOGUCHI: You can work out but you can't use the shower.

ISHIKAWA: On certain days.

NOGUCHI: Yes, locker room facilities. So the days that I go I see mostly men.

ISHIKAWA: Monday, Wednesday, or Friday?

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. Then Sunday, two hours is for the men and two hours in the afternoon is for the ladies.

ISHIKAWA: Is Helen going?

NOGUCHI: Yes, she's been going. As of about three weeks ago, she's been going just about every morning, trying to get there early, you know, because men's day. Until 9 o'clock ladies can go there and swim and after 9 o'clock it's strictly for men, and on Tuesday if you go at 6 o'clock the men can go simming. So they got it made so that you can go six days a week and still enjoy the facilities.

ISHIKAWA: That's good.

NOGUCHI: But getting up at 6 o'clock in the morning is too early for me.

ISHIKAWA: So you're 65 now?

NOGUCHI: Yes, I turned 65 now.

ISHIKAWA: Until you hit 70, you're in good shape.

NOGUCHI: Yeah

ISHIKAWA: When you hit 70, you slow down quite a bit.

- NOGUCHI: But, I think, boy, anything else, though, Woody, some of the illness that comes along the way that seem to slow a person down more than anything else. So you have any plans for the future? Do some traveling?
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah, I want to go to Washington, D. C. before they close that exhibit.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, the Smithsonian?
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah. How long --is it two more years? Not too long, is it?
- NOGUCHI: No, it's not too long. No. Yeah.
- ISHIKAWA: I would like to go to Canada again this year.
- NOGUCHI: You usually fly up there to Canada?
- ISHIKAWA: No, I don't like to fly. One, I don't like to fly. If I have to, I'll fly. . .
- NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.
- ISHIKAWA: . . .but I like to drive because I don't have to go straight through to anywhere. I can stop here, stop there--enjoy it.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, you like that. Oh, I see.
- ISHIKAWA: We go to Las Vegas every year, you know. Takes me two weeks to get there. I go to Los Angeles to see all my nephews. On the way we stop.
- NOGUCHI: And you golf in Vegas too?
- ISHIKAWA: Yeah. My wife and I always like to drive and enjoy different things. You know, when you fly, you just go to another city.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, that's me, you know, I got to get there and get back.

[LAUGHTER]

ISHIKAWA: Then when I go to Portland and Seattle, it takes me a long time to go there too. We usually stop at Ashland. . .

NOGUCHI: Ashland, Uh huh.

ISHIKAWA: . . . and see a play or so. I got a niece in Portland. Last year we stopped over at Tom and Alice Kurotori's.

NOGUCHI: Kurotori, right. How is their place?

ISHIKAWA: Oh, they have a nice place.

NOGUCHI: Is that right?

ISHIKAWA: Way up in the mountains overlooking the bay. Very comfortable. So that's why I like to travel. I don't know how much longer I could do it. So when I go up to Salt Lake City, it takes me a couple of days.

NOGUCHI: That's good. Take your time. Well, Woody, I'm going to conclude this interview and I want to thank you for taking the time off from your busy schedule to give us your. . .

ISHIKAWA: My busy schedule? [LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: Yeah, it is. No matter which way you look at it it is a busy schedule and we appreciate it very much and you are willing to donate this gift of your

tape to the archives at the California State University of Sacramento, and the Florin JACL would like to express their appreciation for getting. . .

ISHIKAWA: How did you become a member of Florin JACL?

NOGUCHI: Huh?

ISHIKAWA: How did you become a member of Florin JACL?

NOGUCHI: Woody, that's a secret. I'm not a member of Florin JACL.

ISHIKAWA: Oh, you aren't?

NOGUCHI: No, I am a member of Sacramento JACL but what had happened was Marion Kanemoto asked if I would be willing to interview people and I said, "Oh, I would gladly interview people." And the first one was--she said, "Would you come with me so that I can kind of give you an idea what it entails?" So I said, "OK, I would gladly do that." And the first one was Mrs. Tahara. I said, "Oh, my gosh, my Nihongo is so limited that I don't think I'll be able to interview any of the Issei no obasans." So Marion said, "Fine, we have just the people for you. We've got the Niseis." So I kind of talked myself into it, and I am glad I did because I enjoyed talking to you and Al, Kuni, and Paul. They were just great. I think I enjoyed it more than the person I was interviewing. It kind of gives me a feeling that I learned, and it enriches my life too to know that people have done so much for the community, and I was just fascinated

by what other people had experienced. Like just talking to Tosh Hamataka about his war days I could sit there for hours, and, you know, like before we started golfing or when we are sitting down and just chatting, he would talk about his days when he was in 442 and how he was hurt and injured in battle and so I asked Tosh, I said, "Tosh, could I interview you?" He said, "Well, no, not really." And he told me later-- he said the reason why he said no was that , "I didn't want to say no to you but at that time Susie wasn't feeling too well", and he didn't think it would be appropriate at that time. So at a later date someone else was able to interview Tosh, and there have been other people in the Florin area that had contributed so much to the community that we are able to interview and--but to me I get as much out of it as the Florin JACL, so that is the reason how I got to. . .

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, I was just amazed what Mary and Al did--what they did for the Niseis.

ISHIKAWA: Yeah, it's priceless.

NOGUCHI: I mean there is nothing that you could say that would adequately tell what Al and Mary did for the community, especially the Japanese community at large. They are two wonderful dedicated people.

ISHIKAWA: Yes, I knew them from early in life. They used to live near here.

NOGUCHI: Their new home--the one that he built, yes.

ISHIKAWA: They used to live right by there.

NOGUCHI: Yes, that's what I hear.

ISHIKAWA: His home was right there.

NOGUCHI: Is that the home he built?

ISHIKAWA: No, that home we're talking about is not there anymore.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. Who lives across the street then?

ISHIKAWA: Hakujin.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Hakujin.

ISHIKAWA: Hakujin.

It's peaceful in that area.

NOGUCHI: It is. It's so quiet and so peaceful.

ISHIKAWA That's why I hate to have anyone--close neighbors.

NOGUCHI: Oh, yeah, I don't blame you there.

ISHIKAWA: I hope to die on this property. You never can tell.

NOGUCHI: Yeah, but people go back to the place they were born just to die, you know, so. . . .

: Well, I'm going to stop this tape and conclude the interview with Woody Ishikawa. It is now 3:15, March 30, 1993, and on this tape I would like

to thank Woody for giving up his time to give this interview to the Florin

JACL. Thank you Woody.

[End Tape 2, Side B]

WRA-137

UNITED STATES WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
CITIZEN'S INDEFINITE LEAVE

This is to certify that

Woodrow Toshio Ishikawa
 a United States citizen residing
 within **Rohwer** Relocation
 Area, is allowed to leave such area on **Sept. 7,**
1944 and, subject to the terms of the regulations
 of the War Relocation Authority relating to the issuance
 of leave for departure from a relocation area
 and subject to any special conditions or restrictions
 set forth on the reverse side hereof, to enjoy leave
 of indefinite duration. The holder's first destination
Cleveland, Ohio


29050 *[Signature]*
 (Project Director)

AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO.

**THIS LEAVE IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING
 SPECIAL CONDITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS:**

RIGHT INDEX

(B27807)



Green card issued to a U.S. citizen

NAMES LIST
Florin Japanese American Citizens League
Oral History Project

INTERVIEWEE: Woodrow Toshiro Ishikawa

INTERVIEWER: Kinya Noguchi

COOPERATING INSTITUTION: Oral History Program
Center for California Studies
California State University
Sacramento, California

<u>NAME</u>	<u>IDENTIFICATION</u>	<u>SOURCE OF VERIFICATION</u>	<u>PAGE INTRODUCED</u>
Dakuzaku, George	Friend of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	39
Dakuzaku, Grace	Friend of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	39
Franzanetti	Grape Farmer, Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	17
Hamataka, Tosh	Friend of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	10
Harada, Dr.	Physician of Woodrow's Father	Woodrow Ishikawa	56
Hiraga, Tom	Friend of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	15
Hirakawa, George	Insurance Agent, Placerville	Woodrow Ishikawa	15
Hironaka, Kuni	Co-worker at McClellan	Woodrow Ishikawa	42
Imai, George	Co-worker at McClellan	Woodrow Ishikawa	42
Inouye, Daniel	US Senator	Woodrow Ishikawa	51
Ishikawa, David	Son of Mary and Woodrow	Woodrow Ishikawa	43
Ishikawa, Fusa Ishiguro	Mother of Woodrow	Woodrow Ishikawa	1
Ishikawa, Mary	Spouse of Woodrow Ishikawa	Woodrow Ishikawa	32
Ishikawa, Saijiro	Father of Woodrow	Woodrow Ishikawa	1
Kashiwagi, Bill	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	50
Kurima, Herbert	Friend of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	15

NAME	IDENTIFICATION	SOURCE OF VERIFICATION	PAGE INTRODUCED
Kurotori, Tom & Alice	Friends of Family	Woodrow Ishikawa	68
La Lane, Jack	Spa Owner, Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	63
Masaoka, Grant	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	51
Masaoka, Mike	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	50
Miyao Brothers	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	50
Mukai, Frank & Tom	Friends of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	15
Murata, Yosh	Friend of Family	Woodrow Ishikawa	61
Nakashima, Eddie	Friend of Family	Woodrow Ishikawa	34
Noguchi, Helen	Spouse of Kinya Noguchi	Woodrow Ishikawa	39
Ouchida, Hitoshi & Pedro	Friends of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	15
Ozawa, Dr.	Physician and Friend of Family	Woodrow Ishikawa	60
Sasaki, Reverend S.	Reverend of Buddhist Church	Woodrow Ishikawa	39
Sasaki, Tom	Co-worker at McClellan	Woodrow Ishikawa	42
Satow, Mas	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	51
Slocum	Attorney, Fresno	Woodrow Ishikawa	21
Sugiyama, Henry, MD	Friend of Family	Woodrow Ishikawa	34
Tahara, Mrs. (Tsuné)	Oral History Interviewee	Woodrow Ishikawa	69
Takehara, Paul	Friend of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	11
Taketa, Henry	Attorney, Sacramento	Woodrow Ishikawa	21
Tsuji, Dr.	Physician and Friend of Family	Woodrow Ishikawa	60
Tsukamoto, Sam	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	50
Tsukamoto, Al & Mary	Friends of Family in Florin	Woodrow Ishikawa	11

<u>NAME</u>	<u>IDENTIFICATION</u>	<u>SOURCE OF VERIFICATION</u>	<u>PAGE INTRODUCED</u>
Tsukamoto, Walter	Attorney, Sacramento	Woodrow Ishikawa	21
Uno, Edison	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	51
Wilson, Woodrow	28th President of US, 1913-21	California State Library	8
Yoshimura	JACL Leader	Woodrow Ishikawa	51